

## The Bishops of Texas have endorsed the Texas Catholic Action Plan for Criminal Justice. **Why?**

---

- Meet Pastoral Needs for 1.1 Million Men & Women
- Stimulate Action At:
  - State
  - Archdiocese, Diocese
  - Parish Levels
- Reduce Trauma Within:
  - Law Enforcement System
  - Criminal Justice System
  - Reduce & Prevent Crime

# Improve:

---

- Lives of Offenders
- Lives of Caretakers
- Public Safety

6 out of 10 Offenders **RE**-Offend

They are modeling the  
Treatment They **RECEIVE**.

# Offender Population Characteristics:

---

- School Drop Out
- Abused and/or Neglected as Children
- Reared in Fatherless Households
- Addicted to or Abused Drugs/Alcohol
- No Spiritual Life Lived

80 – 90% of Offenders have  
**ALL** 5 Characteristics.

# State Level

---


## **Texas Catholic Conference**

### **Texas Catholic Correctional Ministries**

- Work with the Legislature to change the culture of criminal justice – from Punitive to Rehabilitative
- Leadership, Supervision, and Management Training focused on Dealing with Offenders

### **Annual Conference**

- Develop a video – “Who Is In Prison, How They Got There, and What To Do About It”
- Promote Prevention Programs, such as After School Programs
- Involve Parish Social Ministries, St. Vincent De Paul, and Knights of Columbus in Correctional Ministry



Maintain contact with  
elements of  
Texas Department of  
Criminal Justice  
to suggest and monitor  
improvements in their  
work

# Prison System

---

- Change the culture from Punitive to Rehabilitative, focusing on Behavioral Change for the offender
- Improve lives and abilities of the Correctional Staff through training in:
  - Leadership
  - Discipline
  - Substance Abuse
  - Anger Management
  - People Skills
- Establish training academies for middle management (Lieutenants & Captains)
- Advanced prison management for Wardens and Assistant Wardens

# Prison System (continued)

---

- Provide sufficient Chaplains, AA/NA Programs, Cognitive Programs to assist in behavioral change of the offender
- Increase the pay scale as professionalism occurs
- Ensure that a simple statement of the mission is conspicuously posted in all units

# Parole System

---

- Develop Parole Teams in units to determine if ready for parole
- Train Parole Officers in substance abuse and addiction, people skills, leadership and supervisory methods
- Provide all staff members with an understanding of who is in prison, how they got there and what **WE** can do about it



# Parole System (continued)

---

- Effect a cultural change from Enforcement to Rehabilitation within parole
- Help change Parolees life styles and not re-incarcerate unless they are a serious threat to society or commit another felony

# Probation System: Community Justice Assistance Division

---

- Offer the same training to Probation Officers as to Parole Officers
- Increase funding for more Probation Officers
- Encourage work with State Judges to use alternatives to incarceration wherever possible

# ArchDiocese/Diocese

## These Tasks are in order of priority

---

- Assign a Diocesan Director of Criminal Justice Ministries with a budget
- Determine status of activities within prison and jail units within the ArchDiocese/Diocese
- Determine additional Catholic presence required to meet Sacramental Needs of the inmates
- Hold informational and training sessions to provide support to Parishes in their Ministry Development

# ArchDiocese/Diocese (continued)

---

- Recruit volunteers (Priests, Deacons and /or lay persons) to provide services and programs, Bible studies, sacramental preparations, mentoring or similar programs needed in jails and prisons within their jurisdiction
- Help develop parish teams to work with offenders in prison, parolees or probationers in the community and their families

# Arch Diocese/Diocese (continued)

---

- Determine what local District Attorneys and District Judges are doing to find alternatives to incarcerations
- Set up a Diocesan Criminal Justice Sunday

# Parish Level

## In Order of recommended priority

---

- Assign a capable volunteer, clergy or lay person to coordinate criminal justice activities in the Parish
- Develop Parish Teams

# Establish Parish Teams to:

- Support Priests and Deacons who provide sacraments and religious instruction to inmates in jail and prison facilities
- Provide for the Prayer and Spiritual needs of inmates in areas without Priests or Deacons, such as prayer services, rosaries, mentoring, etc.
- Provide material support to families of incarcerated who are in need in conjunction with Social Ministries
- Provide Support to Formerly Incarcerated persons Encouraging sobriety and employment

## Establish Parish Teams to:

- Encourage local Parish and other business owners to hire ex-offenders who want stability (show them video “Who’s in Prison...”)
- Work with victim groups at Police & Sheriff’s Departments to determine any moral or material support that may be provided to victims of crime
- Encourage the local Judiciary District and County Attorney to develop alternatives for those who really need treatment



## Establish Parish Teams to:

- Adopt a Law Enforcement Unit and give those in the Unit support and encouragement in their work
- In conjunction with local Sheriff and Police Departments and Mental Health and Mental Retardation Facilities, help reduce the low-level repeat populations that fill most county jails through **diversion, treatment or mentoring programs**
- Involve community-wide support